

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 NSC-05 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 2724

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI UAE

AMEMBASSY DOHA QATAR

AMEMBASSY JIDDA SAUDI ARABIA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT OMAN

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IRAN

COMIDEASTFOR

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 067

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : PFOR, XF, IR, BA

SUBJECT : PERSIAN GULF TERMINOLOGY ISSUE

REFERENCE : TEHRAN 507

1. IN BRIEF ASIDE AT SOCIAL OCCASION EVENING JANUARY 20, BAHRAIN INFORMATION MINISTER MOAYYED ASSURED ME THAT JANUARY 20 MEETING ON GULF NEWS AGENCY, WHICH WILL NOT IN FACT GET UNDERWAY UNTIL JANUARY 21, WILL BE "STRICTLY TECHNICAL" IN NATURE AND HOPEFULLY WILL NOT ADD FURTHER HEAT TO THE TERMINOLOGY ISSUE.

2. EARLIER, BOTH BAHRAIN'S FOREIGN MINISTER AND INFORMATION
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MINISTER HAD PRIVATELY STRESSED GOB'S DESIRE TO SEE THIS

TEMPEST BLOW OVER. BOTH SAID THEY HAD ASSURED IRANIAN AMBASSADOR TO BAHRAIN THE USE OF "ARAB" IN REFERRING TO GULF IN NEWS AGENCY CONTEXT HAD BEEN A BUREAUCRATIC SLIPUP AND NOT A PREMEDITATED ACT. INFORMATION MINISTER SAID HE HAD SHOWN IRANIAN AMBASSADOR THE DOCUMENT PROPOSING THE NEWS AGENCY WHICH DID NOT REPEAT NOT USE THE TERM "ARABIAN GULF" AND THAT IRANIAN AMBASSADOR HAD APPEARED SATISFIED.

3. BOTH FOREIGN MINISTER AND INFORMATION MINISTER HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO ME THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF HISTORIC REASONS, MORE PARTICULARLY THE RECENT HISTORY OF THE NASSERIST ERA IN THE GULF, MAKING IRAN SENSITIVE ABOUT GULF TERM. AT SAME TIME, THEY DO NOT CONCEAL THEIR FEELING THAT THIS IS A SILLY ISSUE TO WHICH GOI IS "OVER-REACTING". INFORMATION MINISTER STATED PRIVATELY "THIS TEMPEST MUST BE ALLOWED TO BLOW OVER BECAUSE IT IS TOO ABSURD TO DEAL WITH".

4. WHEN, IN CONVERSATION WITH BOTH MINISTERS, I STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING COOPERATION BETWEEN IRAN AND GULF ARABS THEY FULLY AGREED, DEPLORING OVER-REACTION TO SUCH ISSUES AS AN UNNECESSARY OBSTACLE TO GULF COOPERATION.

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